

# OPINIONS

## Catholic Courier

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### Letters Policy

The *Catholic Courier* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome original, signed letters about current issues affecting church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the church. We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the letter writers' opinions.

Letters must not exceed 500 words. Anonymous letters and the use of pseudonyms are unacceptable. We reserve the right to edit letters for legal and other concerns. With respect to errors in submitted text, we will correct spelling only.

Mail letters to: *Catholic Courier*, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for purposes of verification.

## Group calls for justice, diplomacy as response

### To the editors:

Common Ground for Life is an organization that promotes the consistent ethic of life, opposing the violence common to war, poverty, euthanasia, capital punishment and abortion. We are deeply grieved by the events of Sept. 11, and offer our sincere condolences to the families and friends of all who were killed and injured.

The overwhelmingly generous response of people who have given their time and money, and have united in prayers for peace, sets the stage for how to proceed. Common Ground for Life joins our voice with all who call on our government to respond to terrorism with diplomacy, not bombing; with justice, not revenge; and with care and concern, not hate.

We all know that violence begets violence. If we retaliate with military strikes we are only setting ourselves up for further terrorist attacks against our country. When would it all stop? Has anyone asked why these people are so angry with us? Could the answer give us some clue as to how to end these attacks? The answers are surely complex, but the questions must be asked.

Terrorism hides in the cracks and crevices of our global society. Bombing another nation will not eradicate terrorism. Bombing will, however, kill innocent people and destroy any standard of life they may have been able to eke out. Accepting their deaths as collateral damage would be immoral. Further, killing terrorists will only serve to make them heroes, spurring on their cause. One cannot bomb hatred out of the hearts of people. No, killing will not solve this global problem. Hatred must be eradicated with love. Taking life is not the answer to complex social problems.

Let's fight terrorism with the unexpected, including a reevaluation of our foreign policy in the Middle East, and humanitarian aid to the impoverished people of Afghanistan and other countries. It will be far cheaper to feed people than to bomb them. It will show the people of Afghanistan that we care about them as members of the human race, and affirm that their right to a decent life is as great a right as is ours to the same. We need to look at the Marshall Plan, which was enacted after World War II, as a model for responding to the terrorist attacks. Rebuilding the war torn Europe and Japan was one of our best "weapons" against the spread of communism. We fear we will ultimately destroy ourselves if we further destroy the already fragile existence of the countries of the Middle East, and we suspect that is just what the terrorists are hoping for. Let's not fall into their trap. There has been a letter circulating the e-mail lines, called "Bomb Them With Butter." It is profoundly wise; we should heed its advice.

Board of Directors  
Common Ground for Life  
Churchville

## Continue daily prayer for all victims of attack

### To the editors:

Let us continue praying every day for those who suffered in the bombing via planes attack in New York City. They need all the prayer support they can get. Also pray for those who tried to rescue them and became victims themselves.

Mary Rita Crowe  
East Main Street, Rochester



## Many yearn to answer call to minister to God's people

### To the editors:

There comes a time when it is right to speak. And so I must, in response to the article, "Who will wear the Protestant robes?" (Aug. 30). And I speak as a Roman Catholic, as one who deeply loves Catholic spirituality and sacramentality.

Having said that, I can only say, first of all, that I am privileged to name some good friends among the Protestant clergy. To a person, they are committed and dedicated to their vocation. One likes to think of her ministry as "growing people."

Secondly, it seemed to me, from reading the article, that the issue among a number of Protestant communities was one of distribution of clergy more than a "shortage."

Finally, I could not help but consider the issue of my own Church with regard to a "shortage" of clergy. In that regard I must say this. I personally know a number of people who work very hard to complete a program of study leading to a Master of Divinity degree. This is the degree required of anyone who will be ordained, and it is a three-year program of full-time study. However, these three years are stretched out over a much longer period of time for the people I know, since the de-

gree is most often pursued in conjunction with full time ministry. These courses are expensive, although some scholarship money is now available. Those following such a path do so knowing full well that ordination will not immediately follow, as much as they yearn for such commissioning to serve.

Why would anyone do that? One could conclude that there is some degree of insanity involved in such a course. Or, that God's call on their lives is so profound and so compelling that it cannot ever be denied, regardless of the cost, in so many ways. For the women I know, that latter statement is the truth of their lives. Indeed, "the greatest privilege there is, is to work for God." On this, the feast of Matthew the Gospel writer, one of the readings for the day proclaims: "Each of us has received God's favor in the measure in which Christ bestows it. It is he who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in roles of service for the faithful to build up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:7, 11-12). There are many of us who are saying "Yes" to Christ's call in our lives.

Gloria Ulterio  
Stone Road  
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## Provide just pay, not 'charity' plan

### To the editors:

The Aug. 16 *Courier* contained a separate section on education. Especially impressive was a letter from Elizabeth Meegan, O.P., the new superintendent of Catholic schools in the Rochester diocese. A statement she made bears repeating: "Not only are our classroom teachers certified, but over 50 percent of them have master's degrees. Nationally, the percentage of Catholic schoolteachers with master's degrees is approximately 25 percent."

Now, in the September issue appears an article proudly captioned "Stores promise teachers discounts." The first sentence read: "It's little secret that Catholic schoolteachers earn less than their public-school counterparts."

What's wrong with this? Must they seek charity? They have families to support and

children to educate and should not have to depend upon handouts.

There are proclamations from Pope John Paul II and our Catholic Bishops on economic justice, with fair wages a dominant theme. If we expect to get and keep teachers of the caliber Sister Meegan described, it is imperative that we pay them accordingly.

It seems only fair that the diocese should provide appropriate wages for our teachers. Actually, not to do so is downright sinful! Maybe this should become a goal of the upcoming Thanks Giving Appeal.

As an addendum, the same justice applies to lay ministers employed by the diocese.

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